



In the name of Allah: the Compassionate, the Merciful

سورة الكافرون

AL-KAFIRUN

Name

The Surah takes its name from the word *al-kafirun* occurring in the first verse.

Period of Revelation

Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Hadrat Hasan Basri and Ikrimah, say that this Surah, is Makki, while Hadrat Abdullah bin Zubair says that it is Madani. Two different views have been reported from Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas and Qatadah, first that it is Makki, and second that it is Madani. However, according to the majority of commentators, it is a Makki Surah, and its subject- matter itself points to its being a Makki revelation.

Historical Background

There was a time in Makkah when although a storm of opposition had arisen in the pagan society of Quraish against the message of Islam preached by the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), yet the Quraish chiefs had not yet lost hope that they would reach some sort of a compromise with him. Therefore, from time to time they would visit him with different proposals of compromise so that he accepted one of them and the dispute between them was brought to an end. In this connection, different traditions have been related in the *Hadith*.

According to Hadrat Abdullah bin Abbas, the Quraish proposed to the Holy Prophet; "We shall give you so much of wealth that you will become the richest man of Makkah; we shall give you whichever woman you like in marriage; we are prepared to follow and obey you as our leader, only on the condition that you will not speak ill of our gods. If you do not agree to this, we present another proposal which is to your as well as to our advantage." When the Holy Prophet asked what it was, they said that if he would worship their gods, Lat and Uzza, for a year, they would worship his God for the same space of time. The Holy Prophet said: "Wait awhile; let me see what my Lord

commands in this regard."Thereupon the revelation came down: *Qul ya-ayyuhal- kafirun...* and: *Qul afa-ghair Allahi...* (Az-Zumar: 64): "Say to them: ignorant people do you bid me to worship others than Allah?" (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Tabarani). According to another tradition from Ibn Abbas, the Quraish said to the Holy Prophet: "O Muhammad, if you kiss our gods, the idols, we shall worship your God."Thereupon, this Surah was sent down. (Abd bin Humaid).

Said bin Mina (the freed slave of Abul Bakhtari) has related that Walid bin Mughirah, As bin Wail, Aswad bin al-Muttalib and Umayyah bin Khalaf met the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and said to him:"O Muhammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), let us agree that we would worship your God and you would worship our gods, and we would make you a partner in all our works. If what you have brought was better than what we possess, we would be partners in it with You, and have our share in it, and if what we possess is better than what you have brought, you would be partner in it with us and have your share of it."At this Allah sent down: *Qul ya-ayyuhal-kafirun* (Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Hisham also has related this incident in the *Sirah*).

Wahb bin Munabbih has related that the people of Quraish said to Allah's' Messenger: "If you like we would enter your faith for a year and you would enter our faith for a year."(Abd bin Humaid, Ibn Abi Hatim).

These traditions show that the Quraish had proposed such things to the Holy Prophet not once, in one sitting, but at different times and on different occasions; and there was need that they should be given a definite, decisive reply so that their hope that he would come to terms with them on the principle of "give and take" was frustrated for ever.

Theme and Subject Matter

If the Surah is read with this background in mind, one finds that it was not revealed to preach religious tolerance as some people of today seem to think, but it was revealed in order to exonerate the Muslims from the disbelievers religion, their rites of worship, and their gods, and to express their total disgust and unconcern with them and to tell them that Islam and kufr (unbelief) had nothing in common and there was no possibility of their being combined and mixed into one entity. Although it was addressed in the beginning to the disbelieving Quraish in response to their proposals of compromise, yet it is not confined to them only, but having made it a part of the Quran, Allah gave the Muslims the eternal teaching that they should exonerate themselves by word and deed from the creed of kufr wherever and in whatever form it be, and should declare without any reservation that they cannot make any compromise with the disbelievers in the matter of Faith. That is why this Surah continued to be recited when the people to whom it was addressed as a rejoinder, had died and been forgotten, and those Muslims also continued to recite it who were disbelievers at the time it was revealed, and the Muslims still recite it centuries after they have passed away, for expression of disgust with and dissociation from *kufr* and its rites is a perpetual demand of Faith.

As for the esteem in which the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) held this Surah, it can be judged from the following few *ahadith*:

Hadrat Abdullah bin Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) has related that on many an occasion he heard the Holy Prophet recite Surahs *Qul Ya- ayyuhal- kafirun* and *Qul Huwu-Allahu ahad* in the two rakahs before the Fajr obligatory Prayer and in the two rakahs after the Maghrib obligatory Prayer.

Several traditions on this subject with a little variation in wording have been related by Imam Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Nasai, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban, Ibn Marduyah from Ibn Umar.

Hadrat Khabbab says: "The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said to me: when you lie down in bed to sleep, recite *Qul ya-ayyuhal kafirun*, and this was the Holy Prophet's own practice also; when he lay down to sleep, he recited this Surah." (Bazzar, Tabarani, Ibn Marduyah).

According to Ibn Abbas, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) said to the people: "Should I tell you the word which will protect you from polytheism? It is that you should recite *Qul ya-ayyuhal kafirun* when you go to bed." (Abu Ya'la, Tabarani).

Hadrat Anas says that the Holy Prophet said to Hadrat Mu'adh bin Jabal; "Recite *Qul ya-ayyuhal-kafirun* at the time you go to bed, for this is immunity from polytheism." (Baihaqi in *Ash-Shu'ab*).

Both Fardah bin Naufal and Abdur Rahman bin Naufal have stated that their father, Naufal bin Muawiyah al-Ashjai, said to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace): "Teach me something which I may recite at the time I go to bed." The Holy Prophet replied: "Recite *Qul ya-ayyuhal kafirun* to the end and then sleep, for this is immunity from polytheism." (Musnad Ahmad, Aba Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasai, Ibn Abi Shaibah, Hakim, Ibn Marduyah, Baihaqi in *Ash-Shu'ab*). A similar request was made by Hadrat Jabalah bin Harithah, brother of Hadrat Said bin Harithah, to the Holy Prophet and to him also he gave the same reply. (Musnad Ahmad, Tabarani).

The Holy Quran

The Disbelievers

Sura # 109 – 6 Verses - Makkah

سورة الكافرون

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿١﴾

disbelievers	الْكَافِرُونَ	O you!	يَا أَيُّهَا	Say	قُلْ
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Translit	Qul Yā 'Ayyuhā Al-Kāfirūna				
AhmedAli	کہہ دو اے کافرو				
Jalandhry	(اے پیغمبران منکران اسلام سے) کہہ دو کہ اے کافرو!				
YusufAli	Say: O ye that reject Faith!				
M.Khan	Say (O Muhammad (SAW) to these Mushrikūn and Kāfirūn): "O Al-Kāfirūn (disbelievers in Allāh, in His Oneness, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers, in the Day of Resurrection, and in Al-Qadar)!"				
Pickthal	Say: O disbelievers!				
Shakir	Say: O unbelievers!				

لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢﴾

That which	مَا	I shall worship	أَعْبُدُ	Not	لَا
				You worship	تَعْبُدُونَ

Translit	Lā 'A`budu Mā Ta`budūna				
AhmedAli	نہ تو میں تمہارے معبودوں کی عبادت کرتا ہوں				
Jalandhry	جن (بتوں) کو تم پوجتے ہو ان کو میں نہیں پوجتا				
YusufAli	I worship not that which ye worship,				
M.Khan	"I worship not that which you worship,				
Pickthal	I worship not that which ye worship;				
Shakir	I do not serve that which you serve,				

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ﴿٣﴾

Will worship	عَابِدُونَ	You	أَنْتُمْ	Nor	وَلَا
		I worship	أَعْبُدُ	That which	مَا

Translit	Wa Lā 'Antum `Ābidūna Mā 'A`budu				
AhmedAli	اور نہ تم ہی میرے معبود کی عبادت کرتے ہو				
Jalandhry	اور جس (خدا) کی میں عبادت کرتا ہوں اس کی تم عبادت نہیں کرتے				
YusufAli	Nor will ye worship that which I worship.				
M.Khan	"Nor will you worship that which I worship.				
Pickthal	Nor worship ye that which I worship.				

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Shakir	Nor do you serve Him Whom I serve:
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وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُمْ ﴿٤﴾

Shall worship	عَابِدٌ	I	أَنَا	And not	وَلَا
		You are worshipping	عَبَدْتُمْ	That which	مَا

Translit	Wa Lā 'Anā `Ābidun Mā `Abadtum
AhmedAli	اور نہ میں تمہارے معبودوں کی عبادت کروں گا
Jalandhry	اور (میں پھر کہتا ہوں کہ) جن کی تم پرستش کرتے ہو ان کی میں پرستش کرنے والا نہیں ہوں
YusufAli	And I will not worship that which ye have been wont to worship,
M.Khan	"And I shall not worship that which you are worshipping.
Pickthal	And I shall not worship that which ye worship.
Shakir	Nor am I going to serve that which you serve,

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَّا أَعْبُدُ ﴿٥﴾

Will worship	عَابِدُونَ	You	أَنْتُمْ	Nor	وَلَا
		I worship	أَعْبُدُ	That which	مَا

Translit	Wa Lā 'Antum `Ābidūna Mā 'A`budu
AhmedAli	اور نہ تم میرے معبود کی عبادت کرو گے
Jalandhry	اور نہ تم اس کی بندگی کرنے والے (معلوم ہوتے) ہو جس کی میں بندگی کرتا ہوں
YusufAli	Nor will ye worship that which I worship.
M.Khan	"Nor will you worship that which I worship.
Pickthal	Nor will ye worship that which I worship.
Shakir	Nor are you going to serve Him Whom I serve:

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ﴿٦﴾

And to me	وَلِيَ	(be) your religion	دِينُكُمْ	To you	لَكُمْ
				My religion	دِينِ

Translit	Lakum Dīnukum Wa Liya Dīni
AhmedAli	تمہارے لیے تمہارا دین ہے اور میرے لیے میرا دین
Jalandhry	تم اپنے دین پر میں اپنے دین پر
YusufAli	To you be your Way, and to me mine.

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M.Khan	"To you be your religion, and to me my religion (Islâmic Monotheism)."
Pickthal	Unto you your religion, and unto me my religion.
Shakir	You shall have your religion and I shall have my religion.